

REMARKS

Claims 16, 18-26 and 28-31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 26 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 27, and claims 1-15 and 27 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. No new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendment to claim 26 is to include allowable subject matter; (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Office Action's indication that claims 16, 18-25 and 28-31 are allowed and that claims 11 and 27 include allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, claim 26 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 27, and thus is also allowable.

II. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,163,118 to Lorenzo et al.; and rejects claims 1-10 and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lorenzo in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,402,511 to Malone et al. The rejection of canceled claims 1-10 and 12-15 is moot, and the rejection of claim 26 is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, claim 26 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 27. Thus, for at least the reasons discussed in the Office Action, claim 26 is allowable over the applied references. Withdrawal of the rejections is thus respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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